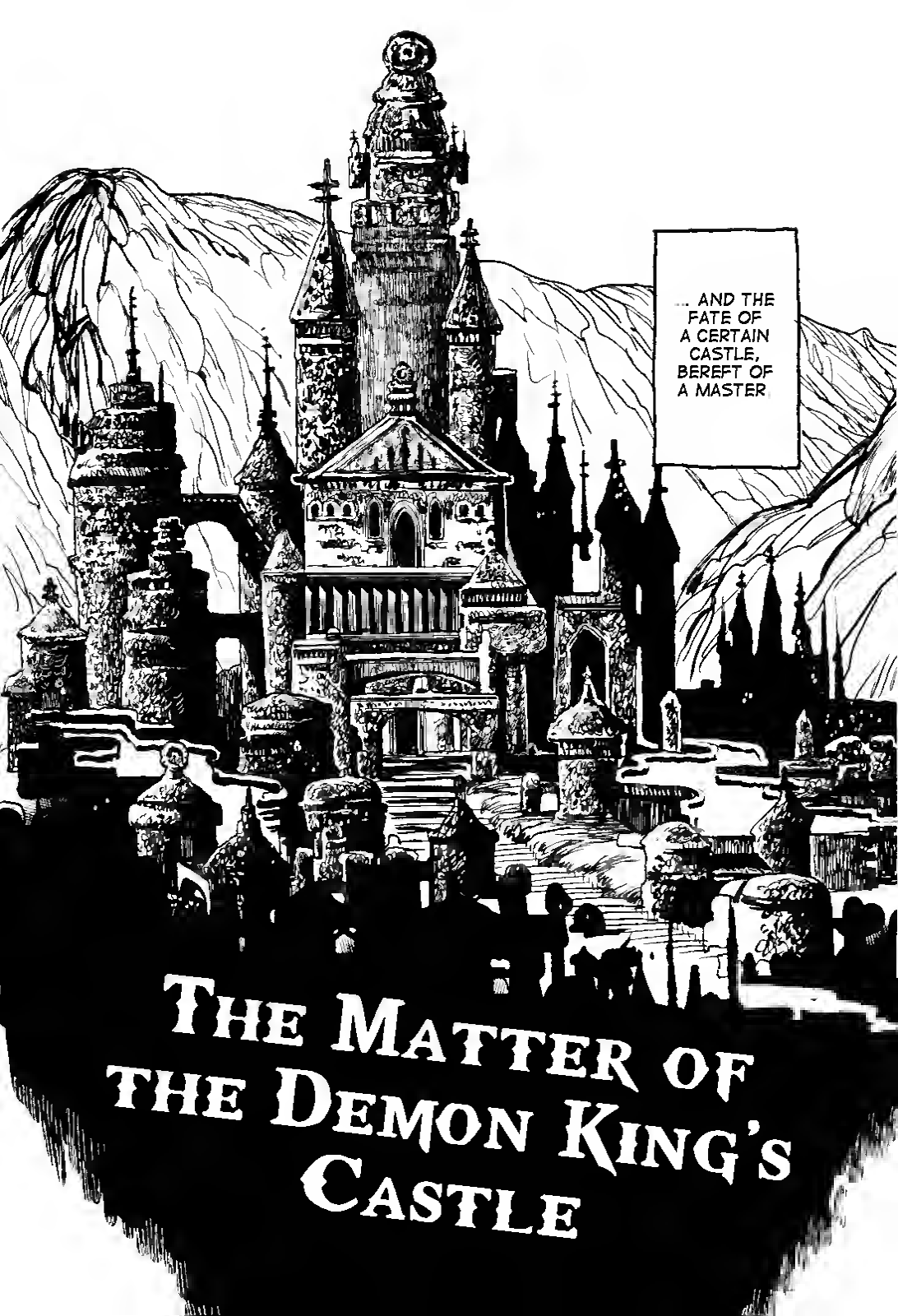
The Dragon's School is on the Top of the Mountain

KUI RYOKO

III

mugentan
mugentan.wordpress.com

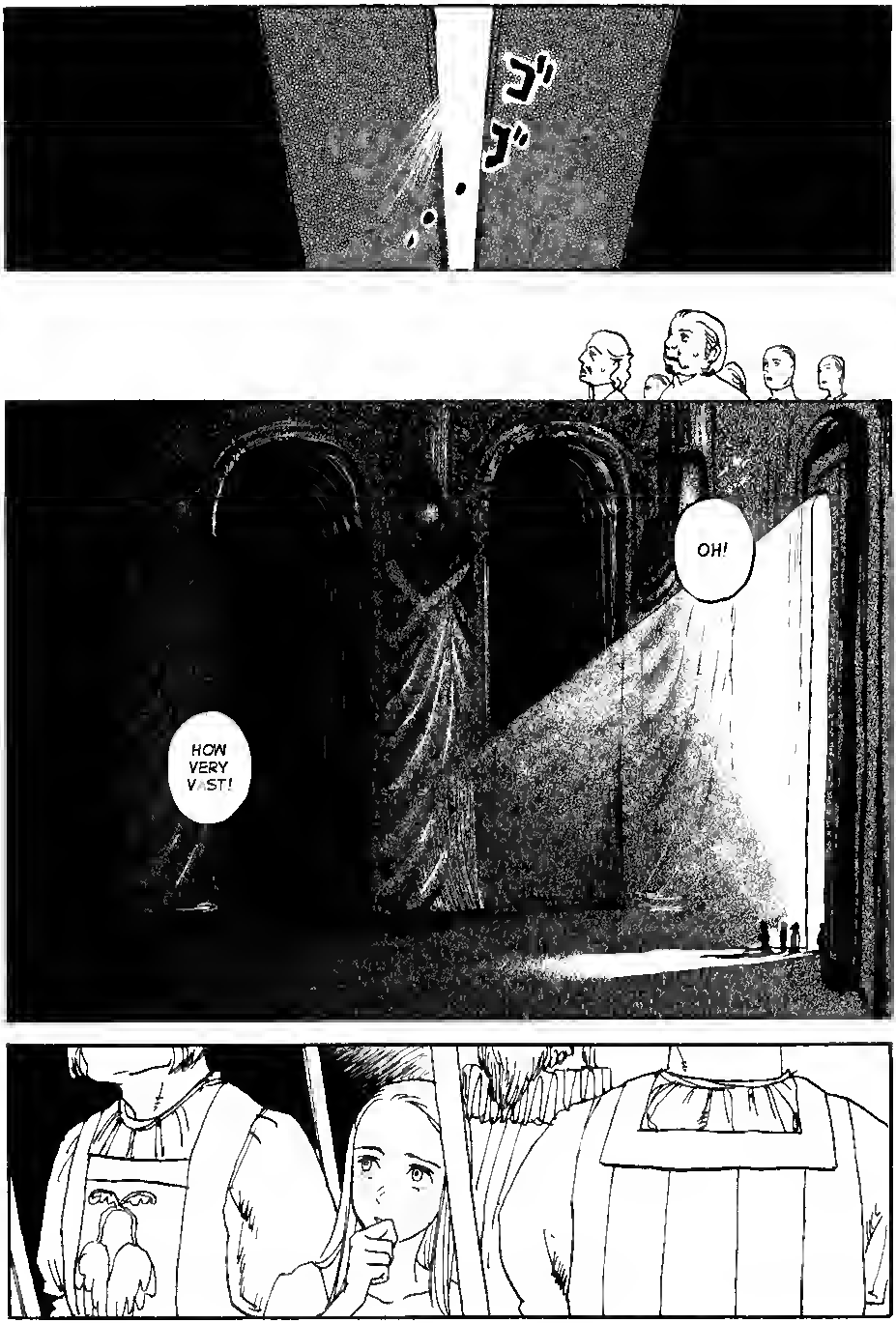
DEMON KING POGKEROTZ, THAT VILE BEAST WHO HAD TORMENTED THE KINGDOM OF EDYLEO FOR A TERRIBLE TWO HUNDRED YEARS, HAD AT LAST BEEN SEALED AWAY IN THE DEPTHS OF THE ABYSS BY THE
HERO HOJYUMOCHIWA, HE CHOSEN BY THE
HOL LORD
ASHO SHI, AND
IS N DMRADES!
FOR A TIME, THE PEOPLE KNEW PEACE, AND THEY REJOICED
THEY WHO HAD WEATHERED THE RAVAGES OF THE DEMON KING THREW THEMSELVES INTO THE TASK OF REBUILDING BOTH TOWNS AND LIVES
YET, WHILE THE DEMON KING HAD BEEN VANQUISHED, A MOUNTAIN OF PROBLEMS REMAINED FOR THE REALM TO ADDRESS
THE RESTORATION OF TERRITORIES, THE MENDING OF FRAYED ALLIANCES, THE HEALING OF WOUNDS AND AFFLICTIONS WREAKED BY THE DEMON KING'S MINIONS, THE PLIGHT OF THE ORPHANED

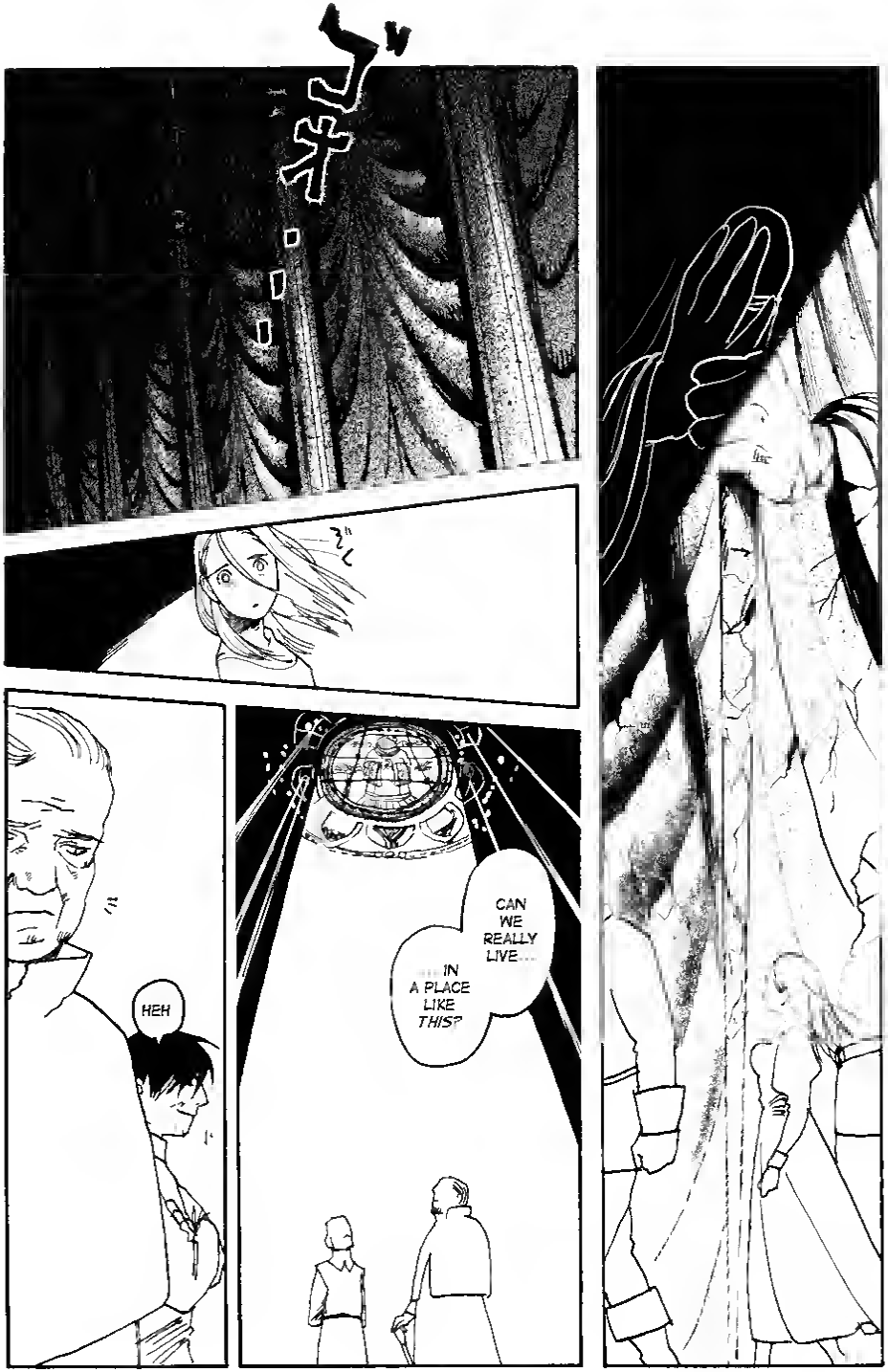

... AND THE FATE OF A CERTAIN CASTLE, BEREFT OF A MASTER
THE MATTER OF THE DEMON KING'S CASTLE

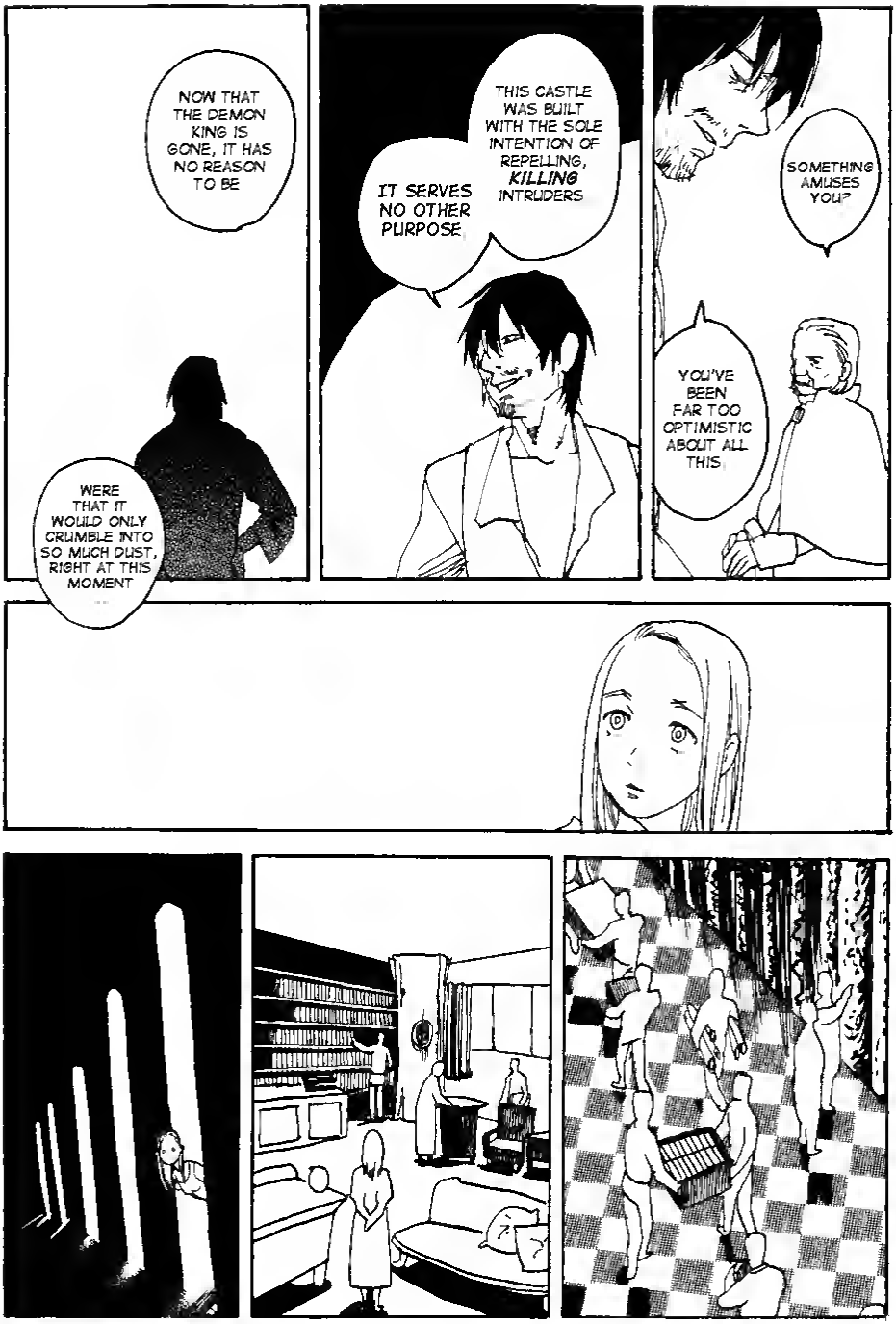
WHAT A BIG CASTLE.
THAT'S OUR NEW HOME, RIGHT?
WHOAA ~!
THAT IT IS.
AMAZING.....
WE OUGHT TO SUMMON ENGINEERS TO INSPECT THE ARCHICTECTURE AND ITS TECHNOLOGIES, SIRE.
AYE, BUT HEED.
THE LIKES OF THAT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN WROUGHT BY MAN.
WHAT TREMENDOUS DESOLATION.
THIS LAND IS BARREN.
I'M UNCERTAIN AS TO WHETHER EVEN *WEEDS* COULD LAY ROOTS IN THIS.

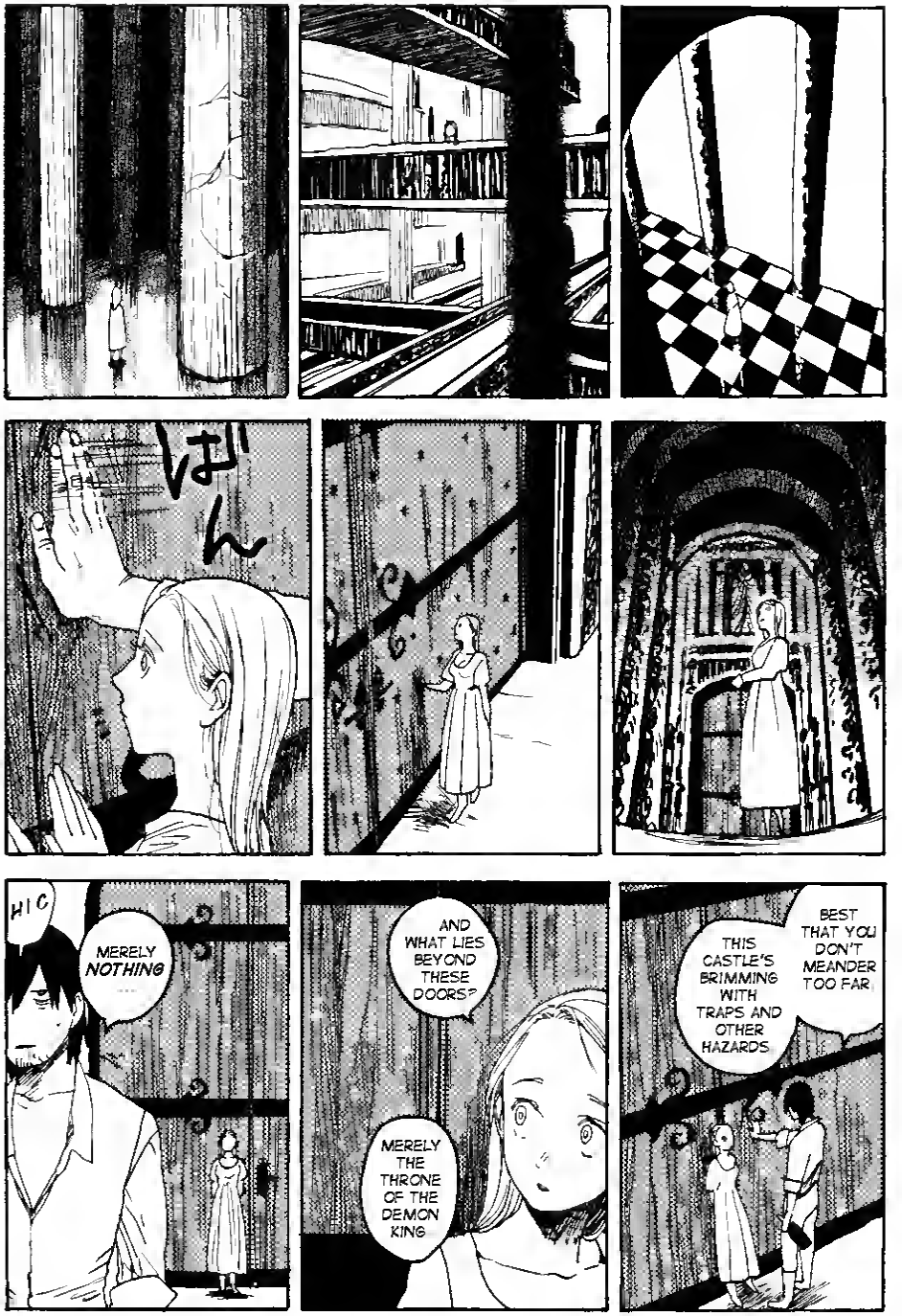
IF RUMOR IS TO BE BELIEVED YOU WILL FIND YOUR NEIGHBORS TO BE MOTLEY BRIGANDS
BRIG-ANDS, YOU SAY?
LET US MUSTER A SUBJUGATION FORCE AT ONCE
'TIS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE THESE THINGS, SIRE
YOU GIVE ME SPEC-ULATION?
M'LORD!
IT IS THE KING'S DECREE THAT THIS LAND BE SETTLED
I ASSURE YOU, SIRE, AS A WAYSTATION FOR TRADERS, IT WILL THRIVE; AND IT IS SURROUNDED BY TERRAIN THAT SHOULD CONFOUND A SIEGE
YOU C*A*N'T GET *THEM* OPEN, IS IT?
SHUT TIGHT AS THE LEGS OF AN ABBESS, SIRE
EARLIER, AFTER THE VANGUARD MADE THEIR WAY INTO THE CASTLE, THE GATES SHUT OF THEIR OWN ACCORD AND
GO AND SUMMON *THAT* GENTLEMAN
.....

PROCEEDING FROM THERE, YOU'LL HAVE MADE YOUR WAY UNDER THE KEEP
TURN EAST ALONG THE RAMPARTS AND THERE'LL BE A STAIRCASE LEADING TO THE CELLARS
PULL A LEVER IN THE EASTERN TOWER AND YOU'LL UNLOCK THE GATES
...WE'D LIKE YOU TO GUIDE US.
MERELY *TELLING* US IS A BIT...
THIS...
I'M DONE WITH THIS FARCE
DONE
AND NOW YOU'RE MAKING ME PLAY CHAPERONE BECAUSE YOU'VE DECIDED TO LIVE IN THE DEMON KING'S CASTLE?
LOOTING GONE UNCHECKED...
WHEN MY COMRADES AND I WERE LOCKED IN BATTLE WITH THOSE FELL BEASTS, JUST WHAT DID YOU PEOPLE DO FOR US THEN?
YOU FOLKS HAVE REALLY MADE ME YOUR HANDYMAN, EH?
A TRIFLE FOR FUNDS...
COMMAND IN DISARRAY...
ぴぴ

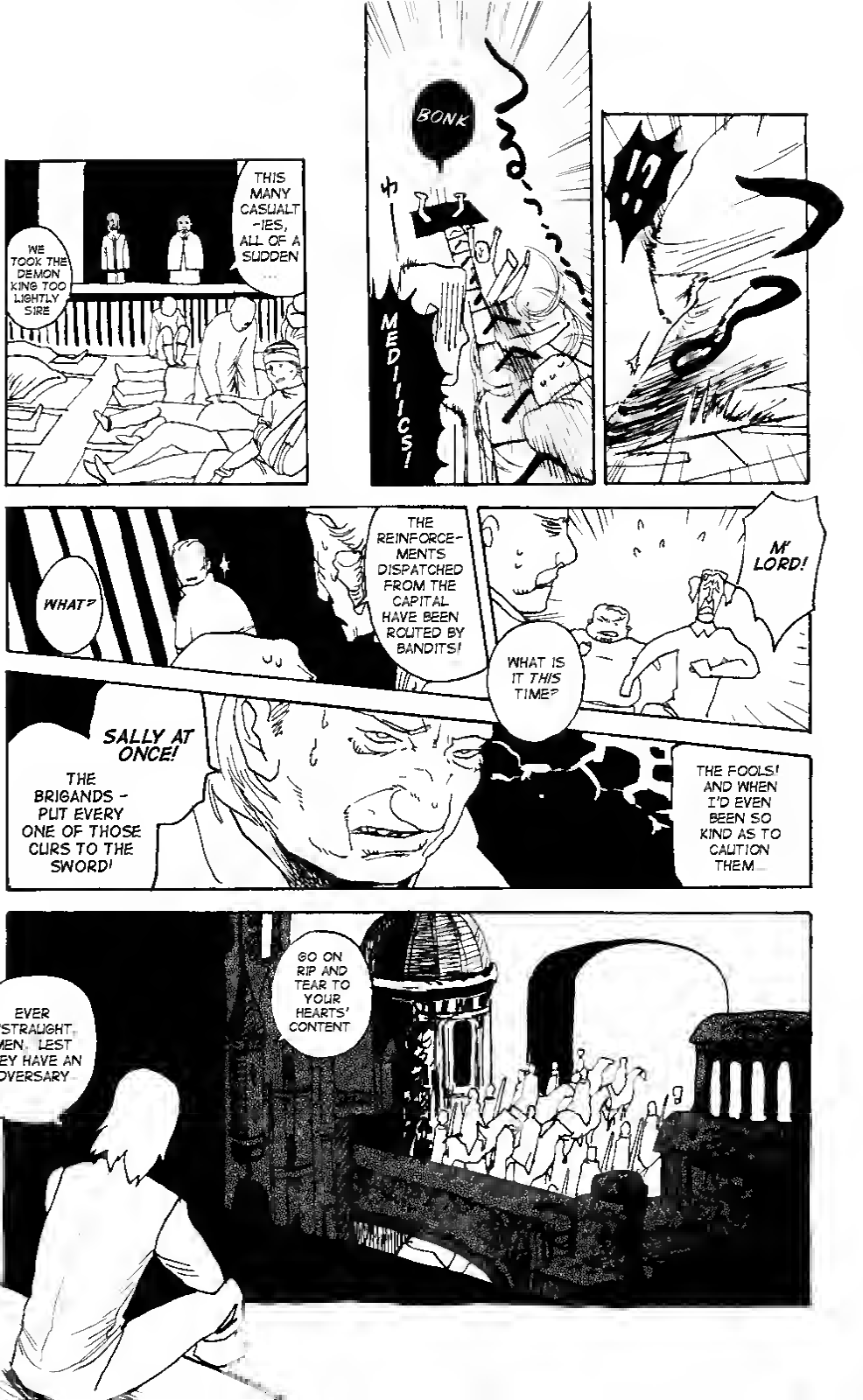

ゴ
ゴ
OH!
HOW VERY VAST!

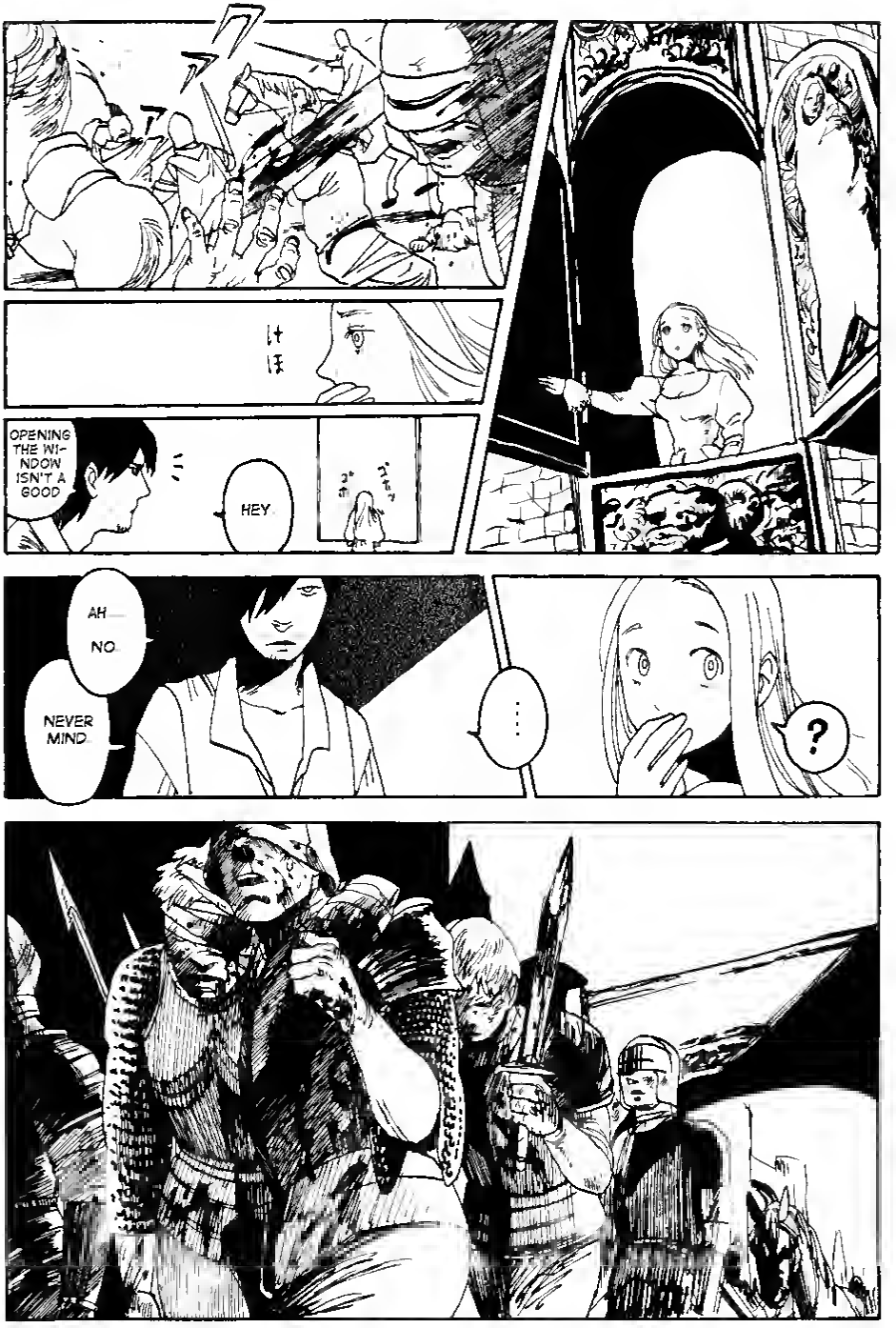

ドドド…
ハッ
HEH
CAN WE REALLY LIVE…… IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?


NOW THAT THE DEMON KING IS GONE, IT HAS NO REASON TO BE
WERE THAT IT WOULD ONLY CRUMBLE INTO SO MUCH DUST, RIGHT AT THIS MOMENT
IT SERVES NO OTHER PURPOSE
THIS CASTLE WAS BUILT WITH THE SOLE INTENTION OF REPELLING, KILLING INTRUDERS
SOMETHING AMUSES YOU?
YOU'VE BEEN FAR TOO OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ALL THIS


ばん
HIC
MERELY NOTHING
AND WHAT LIES BEYOND THESE DOORS?
MERELY THE THRONE OF THE DEMON KING
BEST THAT YOU DON'T MEANDER TOO FAR
THIS CASTLE'S BRIMMING WITH TRAPS AND OTHER HAZARDS

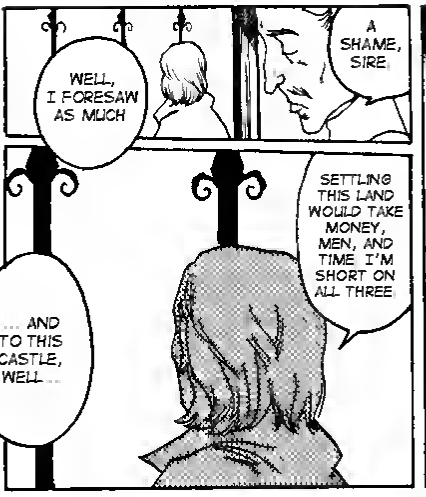
THE HORSES'LL MAIM THEMSELVES, PLOWING THIS
SOIL LIKE STONE
CLICK
MEDIC!


THIS MANY CASUALT-IES, ALL OF A SUDDEN ...
WE TOOK THE DEMON KING TOO LIGHTLY SIRE
BONK
MEDIICS!
!!
M' LORD!
THE REINFORCE-MENTS DISPATCHED FROM THE CAPITAL HAVE BEEN ROUTED BY BANDITS!
WHAT?
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
THE FOOLS! AND WHEN I'D EVEN BEEN SO KIND AS TO CAUTION THEM...
SALLY AT ONCE!
THE BRIGANDS - PUT EVERY ONE OF THOSE CURS TO THE SWORD!
GO ON RIP AND TEAR TO YOUR HEARTS' CONTENT
EVER DISTRAUGHT MEN. LEST THEY HAVE AN ADVERSARY...


OPENING THE WINDOW ISN'T A GOOD
HEY
AH—
NO
NEVER MIND
?

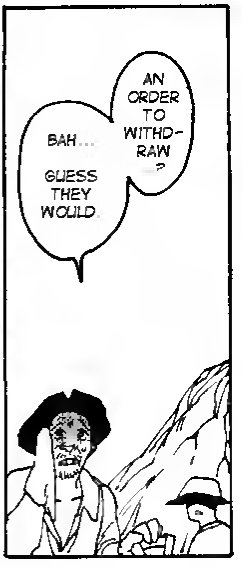
THAT COLD OF YOURS IS A STUBBORN THING, ISN'T IT?
DO RETIRE TO YOUR ROOM, DEAR
SHOULD THIS CONTINUE, WELL...
WE'RE SHORT ON SUPPLIES, SIRE
COULD BE THE NORTH WIND
THE WIND, YOU SAY?
I AM TOLD THAT THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL DISPLAYING COLD-LIKE SYMPTOMS HAS BEEN INCREASING
I FEAR IT... AN EPIDEMIC, SIRE
WHAT!?
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, SIRE...
IS THIS CASTLE WORTH EITHER, I WONDER?
AND IS THERE A MEANS OF COUNTER-ACTING THIS POISON?
COULD YOU NOT HAVE SPOKEN SOONER!?
THERE IS, SIRE
HOWEVER...
IT'LL COST YOU TIME AND COIN
NORTHWARD LIES A GREAT BOG OF POISONOUS MARSHES. IF ITS EFFLUVIUM HAS BEEN CARRIED HERE BY THE WIND, THE CONDITION OF THOSE WITH WEAKER CONSTITU-TIONS WILL RAPIDLY DETERIO-RATE

I WILL PUT FORWARD NOT ONE OF THEM
PFFT


WELL, I FORESAW AS MUCH
... AND TO THIS CASTLE, WELL...
A SHAME, SIRE.
SETTLING THIS LAND WOULD TAKE MONEY, MEN, AND TIME. I'M SHORT ON ALL THREE.

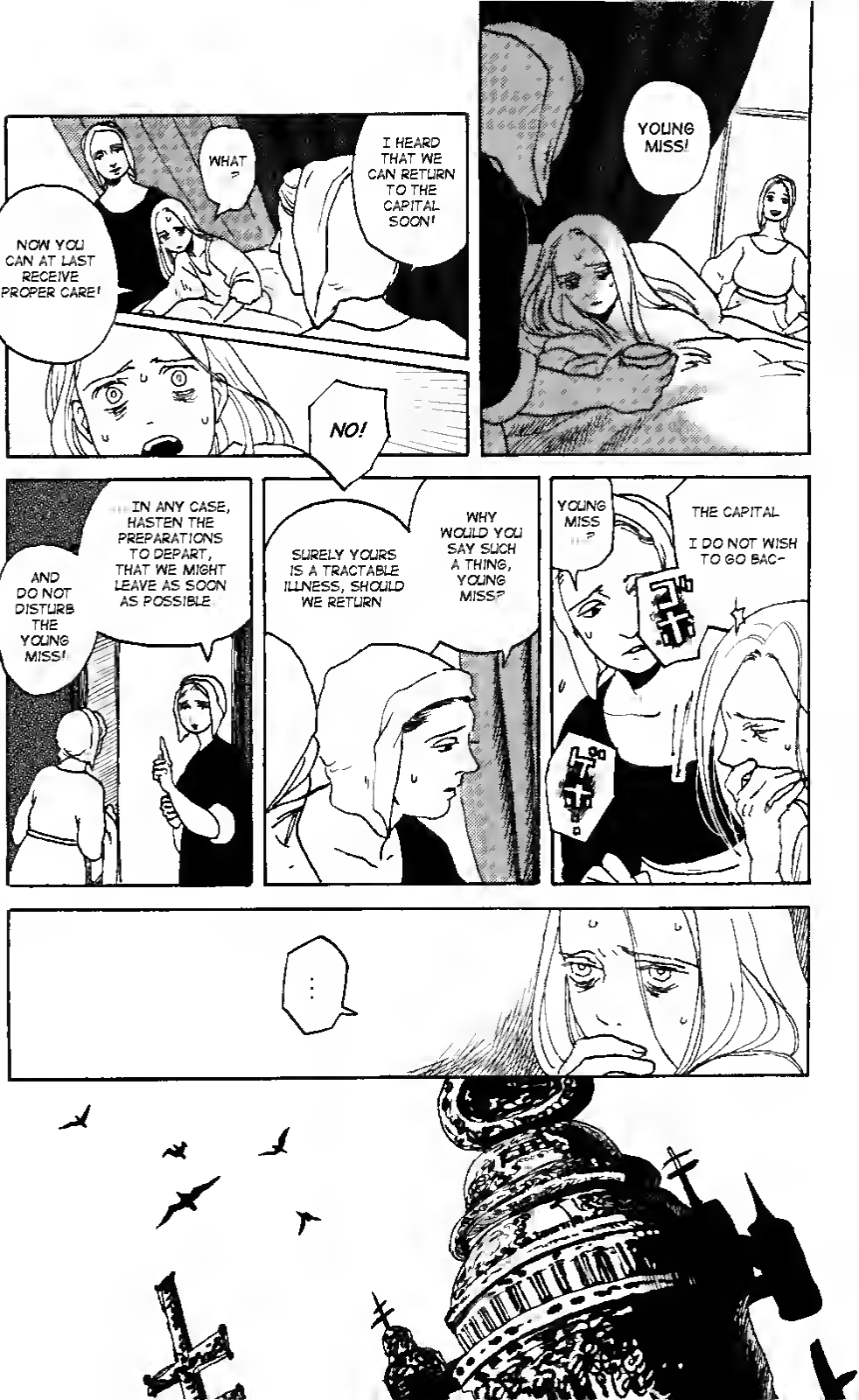
AN ORDER TO WITHD-RAW.
THIS CASTLE IS FORSAKEN.

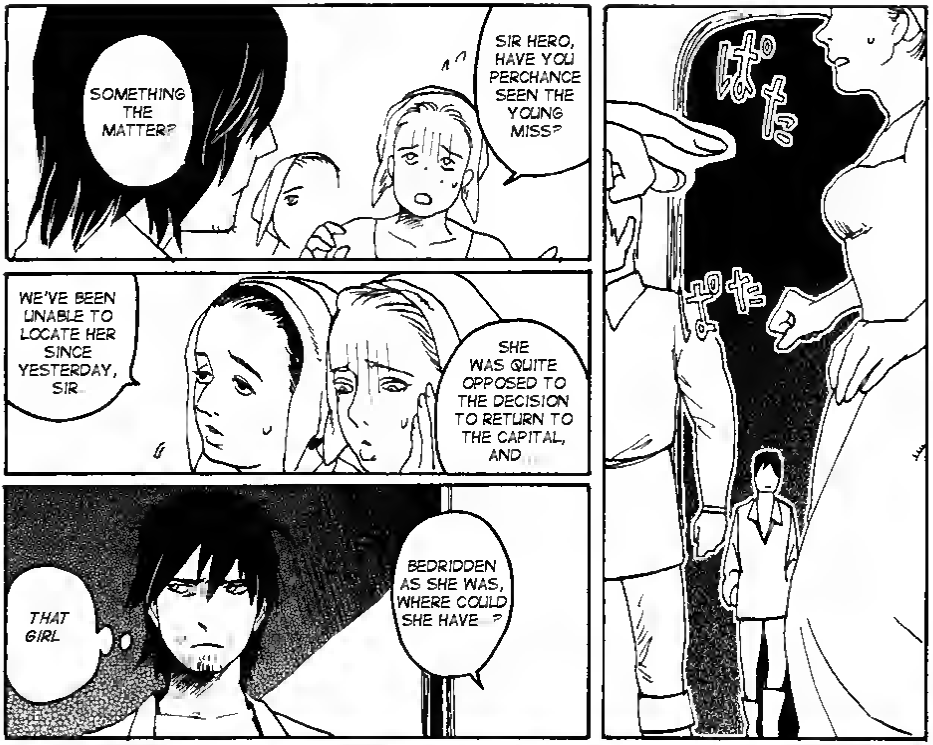
AND WHEN WE'D FINALLY GOTTEN A SPROUT...

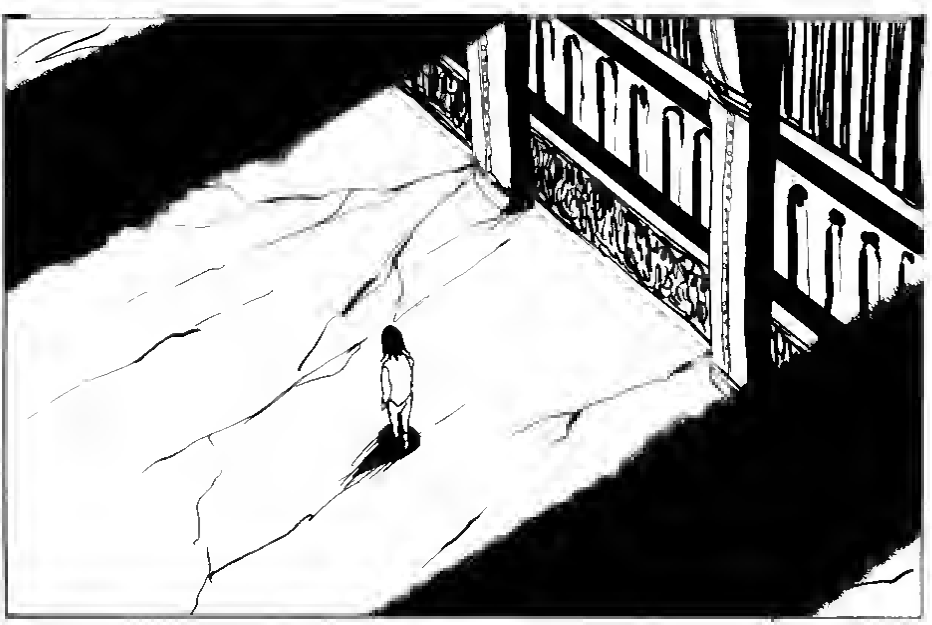

BAH.... GUESS THEY WOULD.
AN ORDER TO WITHD-RAW ?

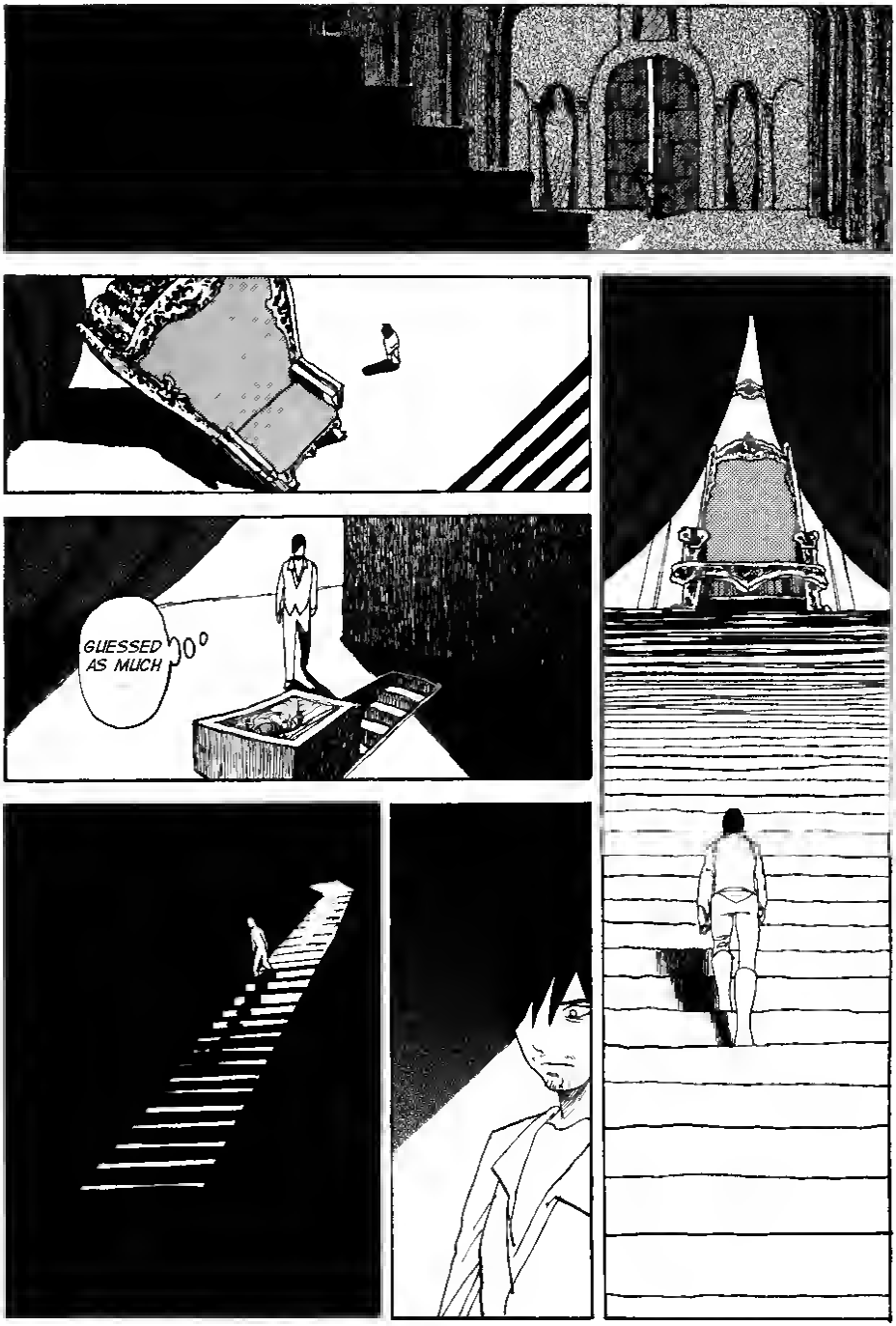
HA HA HA!

MY LORD...
IT DOES NOT FARE WELL FOR THE YOUNG MISS.
THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS HAVE SEEN HER HEALTH DECLINE YET FURTHER.
I IMPLORE YOU. EVEN IF ONLY A DAY SOONER THAN PLANNED, LET OUR DEPARTURE BE-
YES, I KNOW!
ARE THE PREPARATIONS FOR OUR WITHDRAWAL NOT YET COMPLETE?
OUR RANKS BRIM WITH THOSE WHO YEARN TO BE AWAY FROM THIS PLACE, SIRE
OUR PROVISIONS AND TROOP STRENGTH ARE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL.
FURTHER, IT IS UNREASONABLE TO THINK THAT WE SHOULD LEAVE THE WOUNDED BEHIND.
AND CONSIDERING THAT WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT SO AS TO DETER THOSE MARAUDERS...
DAMN IT ALL.
HAVE THE ADVANCE GUARD PREPARE FOR DEPARTURE STILL.
SHOULD WE NOT AWAIT REINFORCEMENTS?
WE WILL RECEIVE NO SUCH THING!
GATHER THOSE SICK AND WOUNDED IN MOST DIRE NEED OF HEALING.
WE DEPART IN A FEW DAYS' TIME.


YOUNG MISS!
I HEARD THAT WE CAN RETURN TO THE CAPITAL SOON!
WHAT?
NOW YOU CAN AT LAST RECEIVE PROPER CARE!
NO!
...IN ANY CASE, HASTEN THE PREPARATIONS TO DEPART, THAT WE MIGHT LEAVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
AND DO NOT DISTURB THE YOUNG MISS!
SURELY YOURS IS A TRACTABLE ILLNESS, SHOULD WE RETURN
WHY WOULD YOU SAY SUCH A THING, YOUNG MISS?
YOUNG MISS...?
THE CAPITAL
I DO NOT WISH TO GO BAC-
...


SOMETHING THE MATTER?
SIR HERO, HAVE YOU PERCHANCE SEEN THE YOUNG MISS?
WE'VE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE HER SINCE YESTERDAY, SIR...
SHE WAS QUITE OPPOSED TO THE DECISION TO RETURN TO THE CAPITAL, AND...
THAT GIRL
BEDRIDDEN AS SHE WAS, WHERE COULD SHE HAVE...?
はた
はた
SFX LIGHT FOOTSTEPS

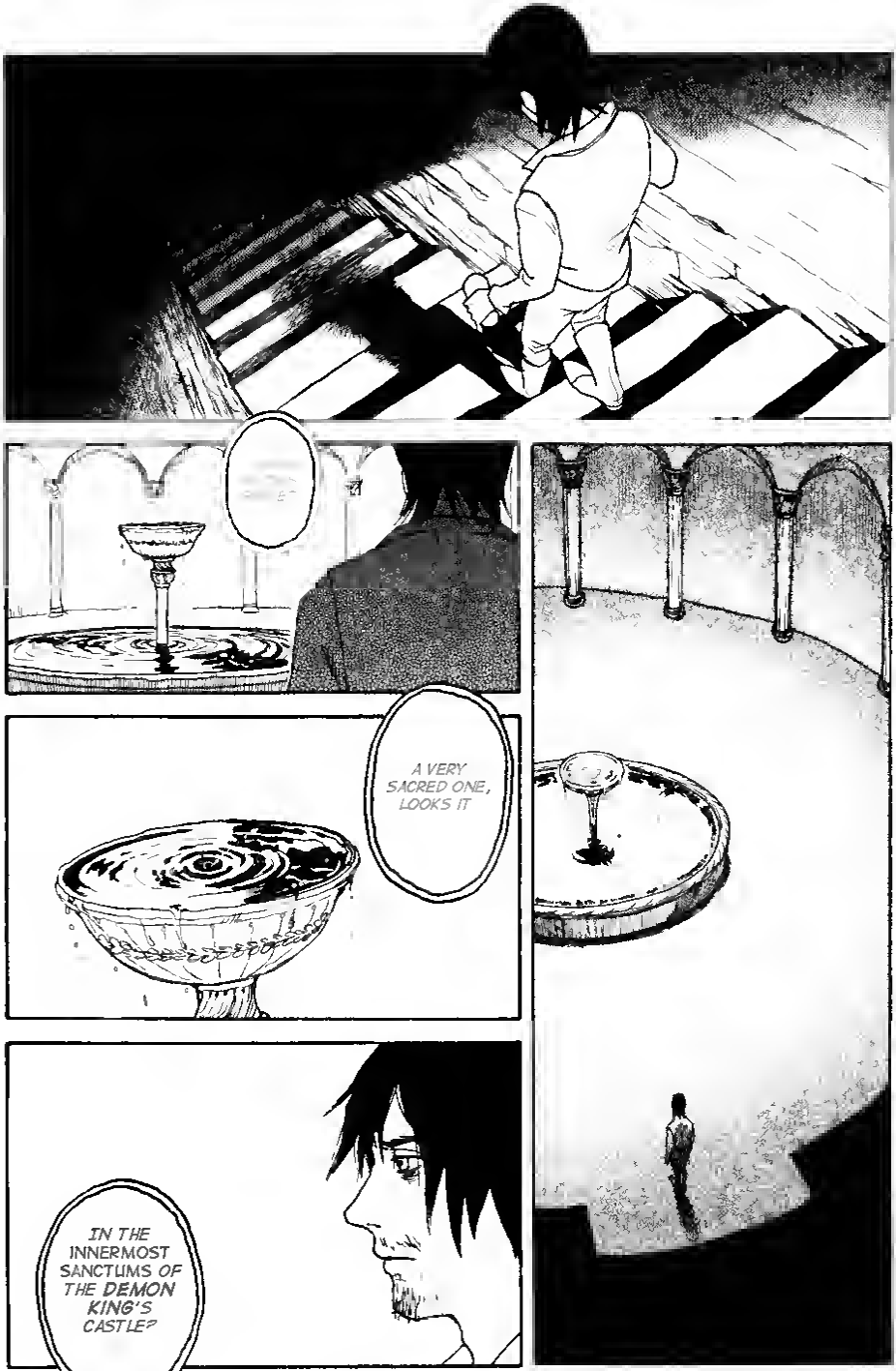



GUESSED AS MUCH

BACK TO THE CAPITAL WITH YOU
!
SPARE ME YOUR EXC-
N- NO, PLEASE
SFX COUGHING
THAT WITH THE DEMON KING GONE, THIS CASTLE
... THIS CASTLE IS OF NO USE TO ANYONE
NOW LISTEN HERE-
YOU'D SAID
I
I WANT TO LIVE IN THIS CASTLE
BUT, TO ME, IT
IT SOUNDED AS THOUGH YOU WERE SPEAKING OF YOUR VERY SELF...!

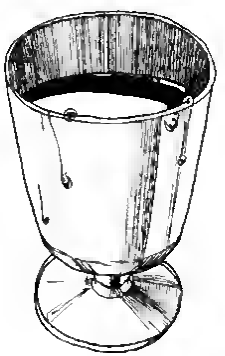
...SIR HERO...
YOU...
THAT WHICH YOU BESTOWED UPON US IS NOT *PEACE*...
THAT IS WHY WE MUSTN'T PART FROM THIS PLACE
NOW YOU'LL KNOW STRIFE WITH YOUR FELLOW MEN
THAT'S RIGHT
YOU ARE MISTAKEN
MY FRIENDS, MYSELF...
THE BLOOD WE'VE SHED WAS FOR NOTHING
WHAT YOU GAVE US IS *HOPE*
SIR HERO

WOULD THAT I COULD GIVE *YOU* WHAT YOU GAVE US, SIR HERO
THAT YOU SHOULD SAY YOU ARE NO LONGER NECESSARY WITH THE DEMON KING GONE
FOR THE HERO TO SPEAK SO
I DO NOT WANT THAT
I WILL NOT *ACKNOWLEDGE* THAT
MY DEAR!
AT ONCE
WE MUST RETURN TO THE CAPITAL *AT ONCE!*
SIRE
HER DEBILITY IS NOW SUCH THAT SHE WOULD LIKELY NOT SURVIVE THE JOURNEY
AAAH!
THAT IT SHOULD COME TO *THIS*...!
YOU'RE TELLING ME TO MEEKLY WATCH HER *DIE*?!


A VERY SACRED ONE, LOOKS IT
IN THE INNERMOST SANCTUMS OF THE DEMON KING'S CASTLE?

AH-
WHAT IS IT?
THIS FOUNTAIN
DID THE DEMON KING SEAL THIS FOUNTAIN IN THE DEEP OUT OF FEAR OF ITS POWER?
IT APPEARS THESE WATERS HAVE THE POWER TO HEAL WOUNDS.
MY INJURY...
IN THE FIRST PLACE, THERE'S NO KNOWING IF WE'LL MAKE IT OUT OF HERE ALIVE
THE ARMY WASN'T THE LEAST BIT PREPARED FOR THIS ASSAULT, AND YOU'RE SAYING WE ***OWE THEM*** SOMETHING?
I'M SURE EVERYONE WILL REJOICE!
WITH THIS WATER, WE'LL BE ABLE TO HELP THE WOUNDED AND DISEASED.
SUPPOSE I'LL BRING A LITTLE OF THIS BACK WITH ME.
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

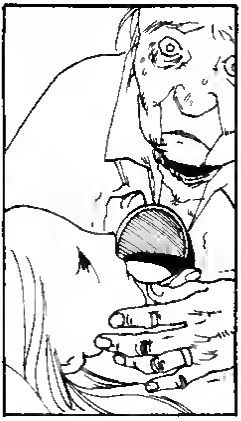
IN THOSE TRYING TIMES, THE PEOPLE WILL FIND THIS FOUNTAIN A BLESSING
THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE SUFFERED, FIGHTING THE DEMON KING'S ARMIES.
AND WHILE I AM SURE WE WILL EMERGE FROM HERE VICTORIOUS, IT IS NOT AS THOUGH PEACE WILL BE RESTORED IMMEDIATELY.
WHEN WE TOPPLE THE DEMON KING AND RETURN,
WE MUST TELL EVERYONE ABOUT THIS PLACE.
ALL THE MORE REASON TO HELP OURSELVES.
FOR THE PEOPLE.
FOR US.
THE WATERS OF THIS FOUNTAIN
THEY ARE HOPE



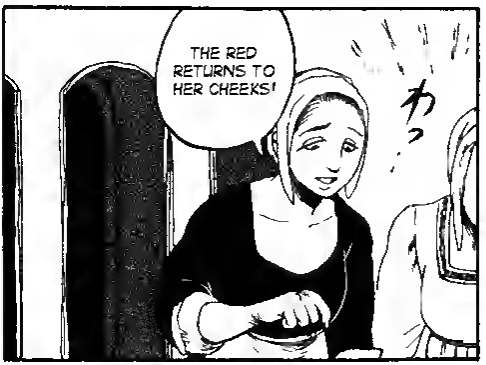
HAVE HER DRINK THIS.

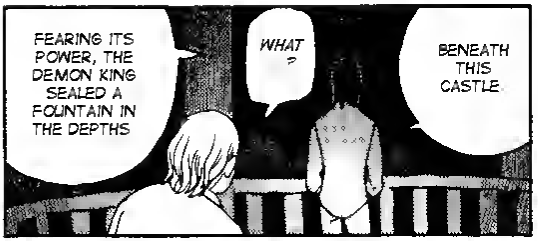
WATER BLESSED BY THE SPIRITS.
...AND THAT IS?

SHOULD ONE DRINK THIS, THEY WILL RECOVER IMMEDIATELY, NO MATTER THEIR WOUND.
IT SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST POISON AS WELL.

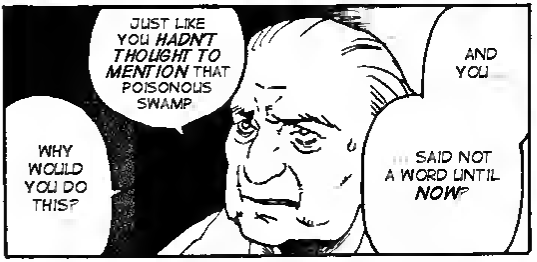


AH!


THE RED RETURNS TO HER CHEEKS!
カッ

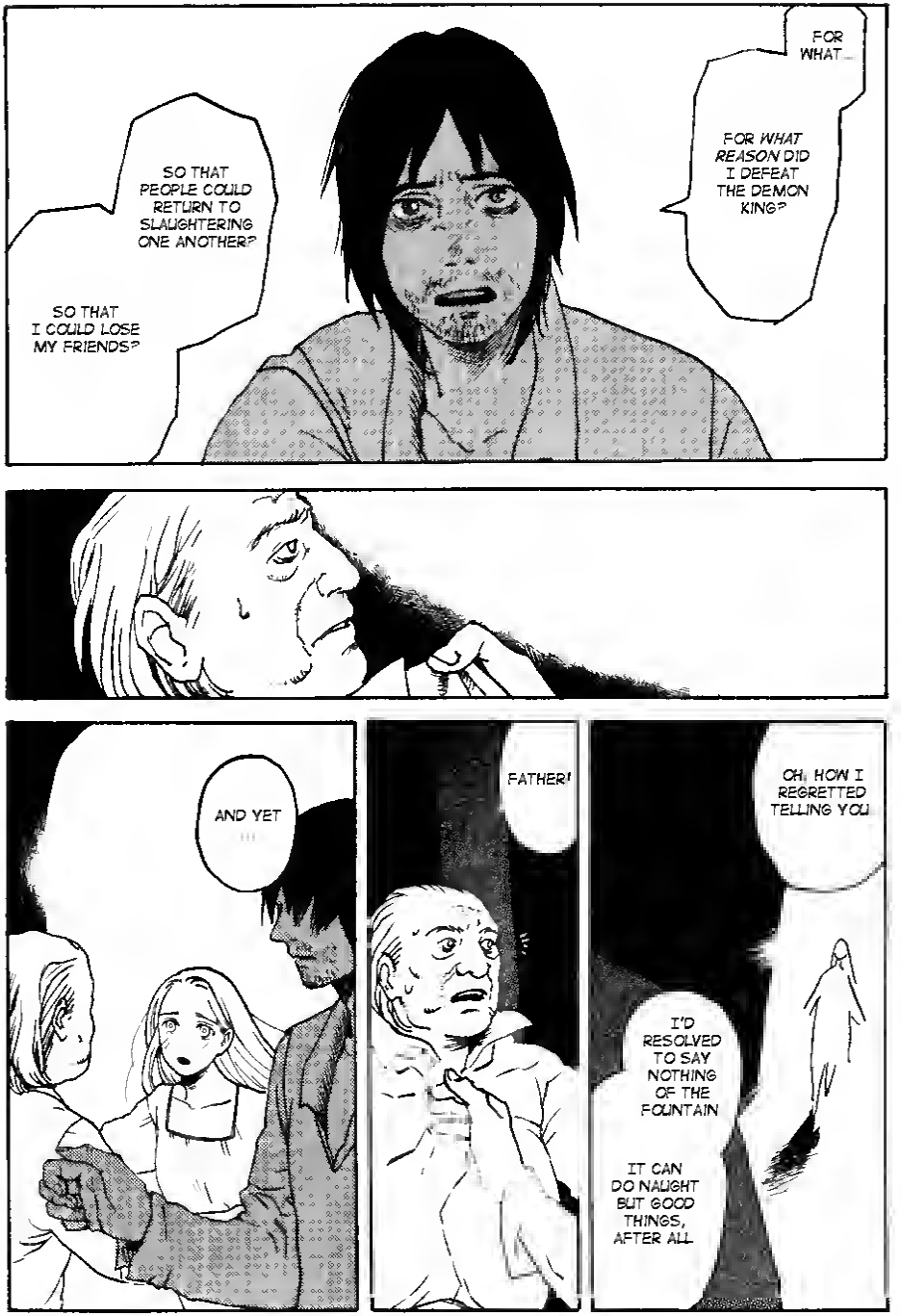

FEARING ITS POWER, THE DEMON KING SEALED A FOUNTAIN IN THE DEPTHS
WHAT?
BENEATH THIS CASTLE

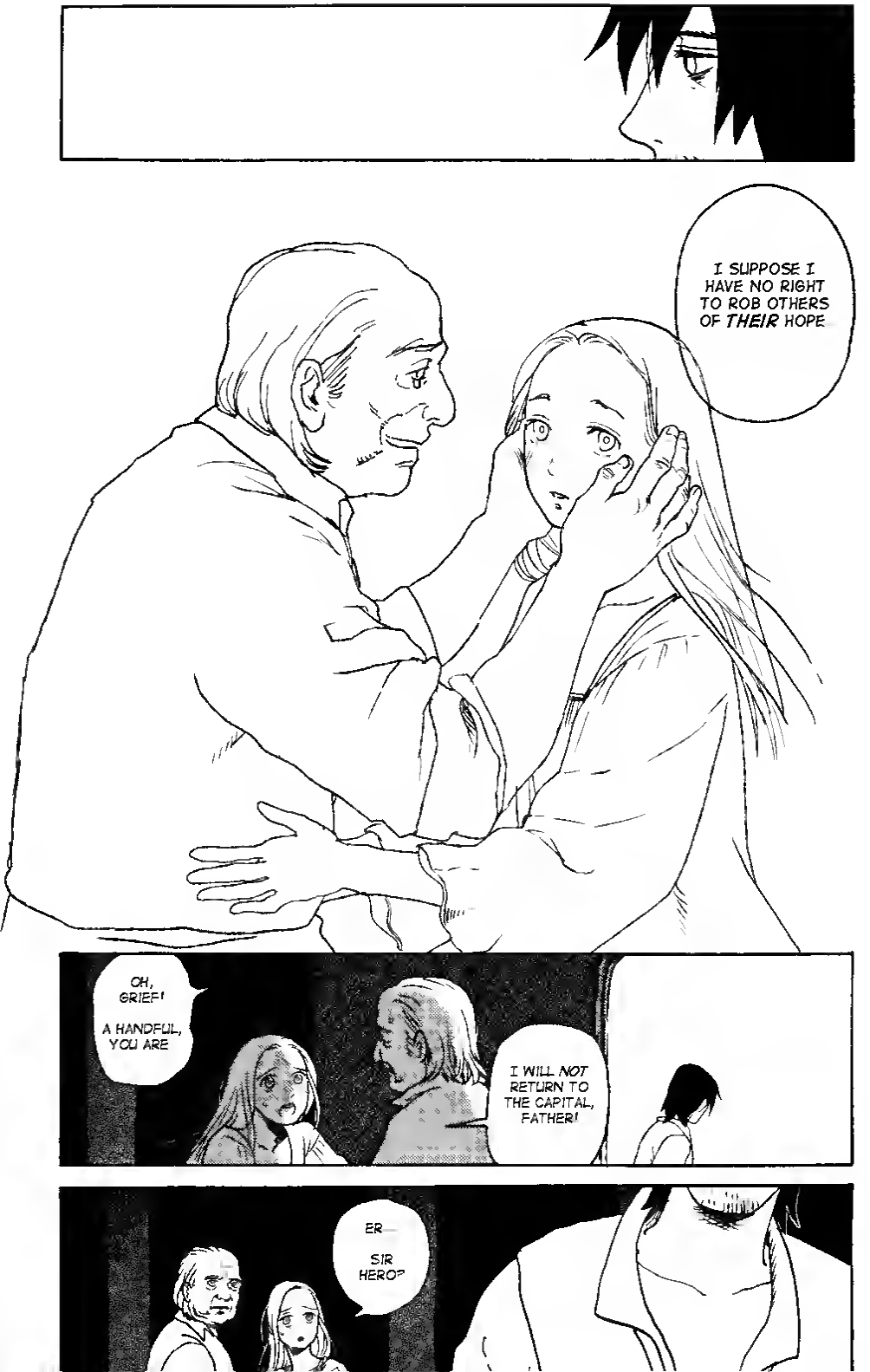
BY GOD, WHENCE DID YOU COME TO POSSESS THAT WATER?

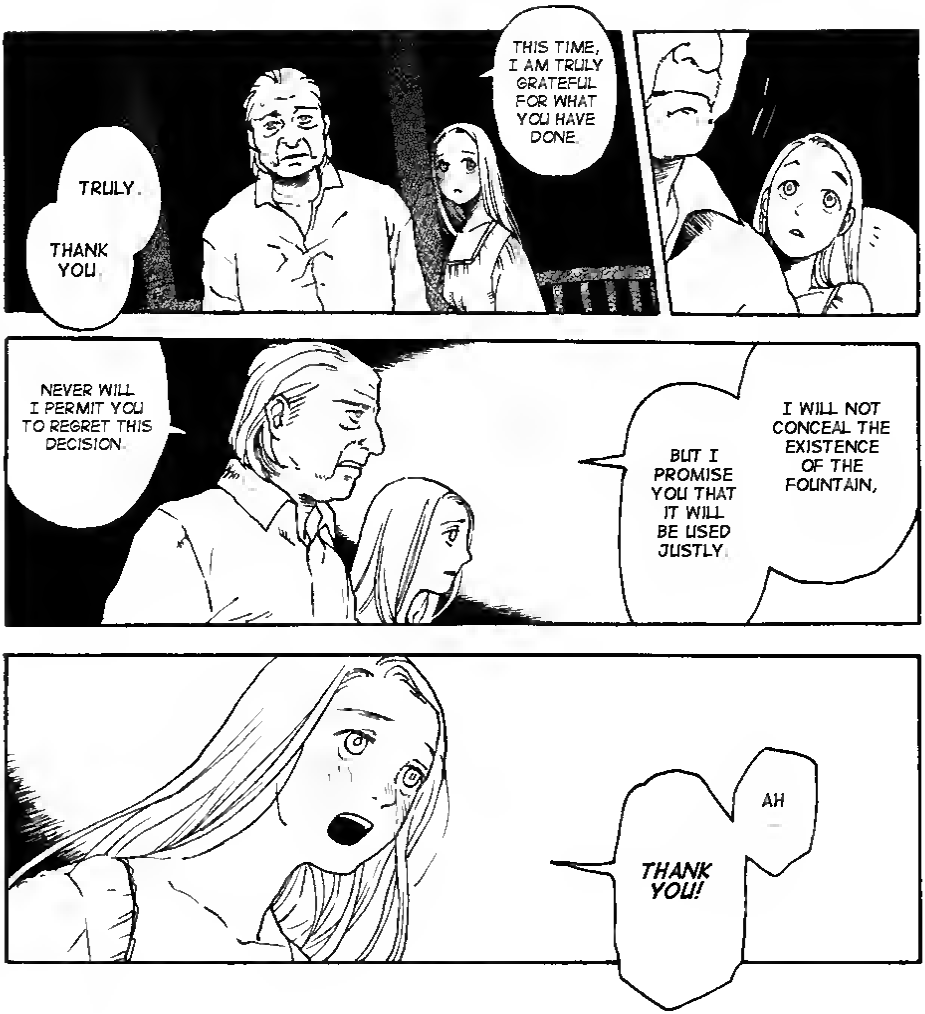

JUST LIKE YOU *HADN'T THOUGHT TO MENTION* THAT POISONOUS SWAMP
AND YOU...
WHY WOULD YOU DO THIS?
...SAID NOT A WORD UNTIL *NOW*?

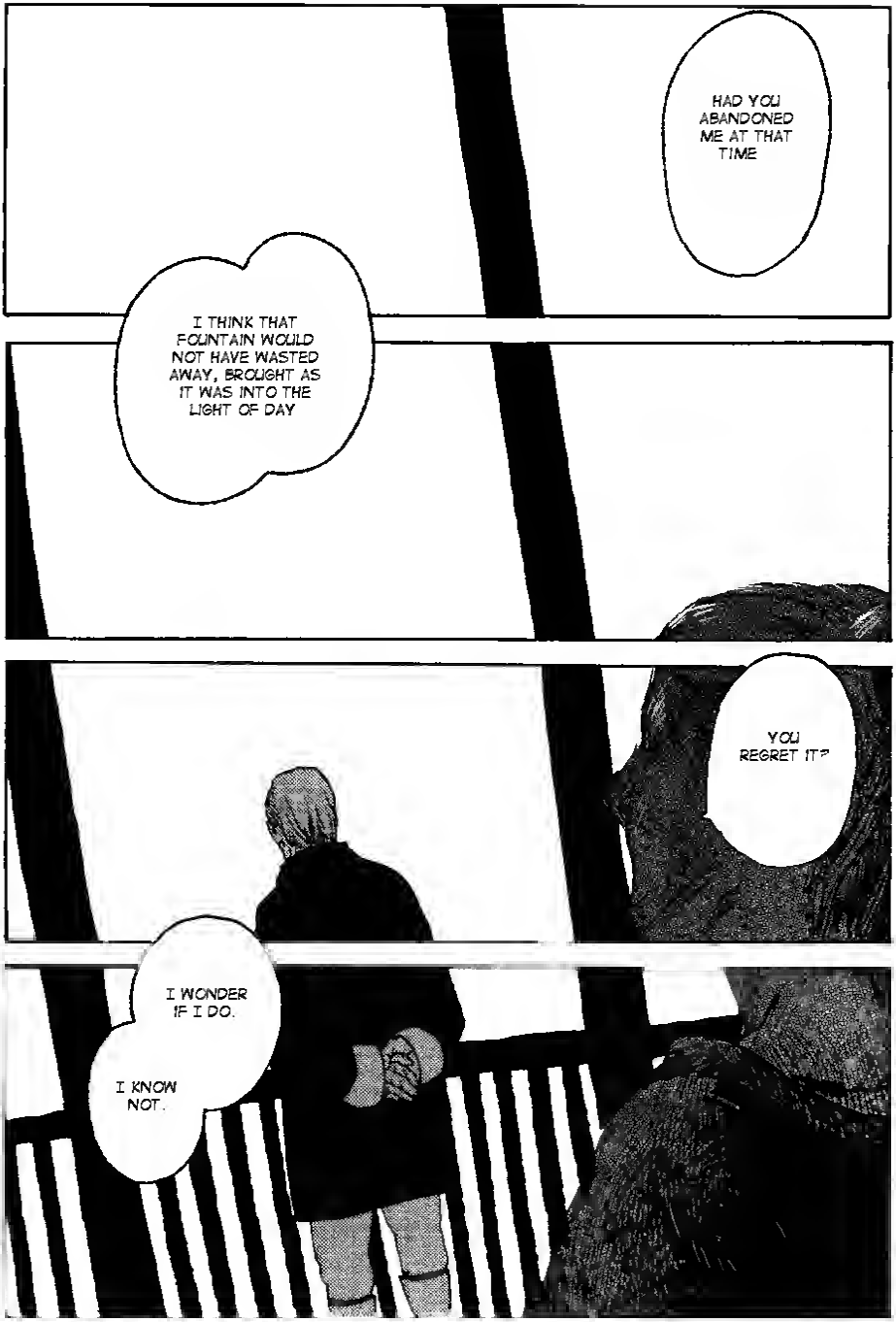
YOU?
YOU THINK ME *UNCOOPERATIVE*?

BUT THAT WAS EASIER SAID THAN DONE!
YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
YOU WHOSE QUEST TOOK YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH!
RESENT ME IF YOU MUST
STILL...
THOUGH THERE IS NO VALUE IN ME SAYING THIS SO LONG AFTER THE DEED
KNOW THAT WE WANTED TO DO WHAT WE COULD TO FIGHT THE DEMON KING ALONGSIDE YOU
AT THAT FINAL FARCE OF A CONFRONTATION, DID YOU LOT NOT EVEN THINK TO SPARE TROOPS FOR A SIEGE, FOR THE REAL TASK AT HAND?
YOUR POLITICKING COST ME BOTH MY COMRADES!
AS IF I COULD UNDERSTAND!
PROTECTING THEIR LIEGE FROM THE VIOLENT SCHEMES OF HIS NOBLE PEERS
THE OTHER IN THAT PATHETIC AFTERMATH,
ONE PERISHED IN THE BATTLE WITH THE DEMON KING,


FOR WHAT...
FOR WHAT REASON DID I DEFEAT THE DEMON KING?
SO THAT PEOPLE COULD RETURN TO SLAUGHTERING ONE ANOTHER?
SO THAT I COULD LOSE MY FRIENDS?
AND YET...
FATHER!
OH, HOW I REGRETTED TELLING YOU!
I'D RESOLVED TO SAY NOTHING OF THE FOUNTAIN
IT CAN DO NAUGHT BUT GOOD THINGS, AFTER ALL


I SUPPOSE I HAVE NO RIGHT TO ROB OTHERS OF *THEIR* HOPE
OH, GRIEF!
A HANDFUL, YOU ARE
I WILL *NOT* RETURN TO THE CAPITAL, FATHER!
ER—
SIR HERO?


THIS TIME, I AM TRULY GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.
TRULY.
THANK YOU.
I WILL NOT CONCEAL THE EXISTENCE OF THE FOUNTAIN,
BUT I PROMISE YOU THAT IT WILL BE USED JUSTLY.
NEVER WILL I PERMIT YOU TO REGRET THIS DECISION.
AH...
THANK YOU!
THAT TIME


HAD YOU ABANDONED ME AT THAT TIME
I THINK THAT FOUNTAIN WOULD NOT HAVE WASTED AWAY, BROUGHT AS IT WAS INTO THE LIGHT OF DAY
YOU REGRET IT?
I WONDER IF I DO.
I KNOW NOT.

BUT HAD YOU NOT EXTENDED YOUR HAND
WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ENJOY A VIEW SUCH AS THIS. HM?

おわり
The End